

Sustainability from the Start

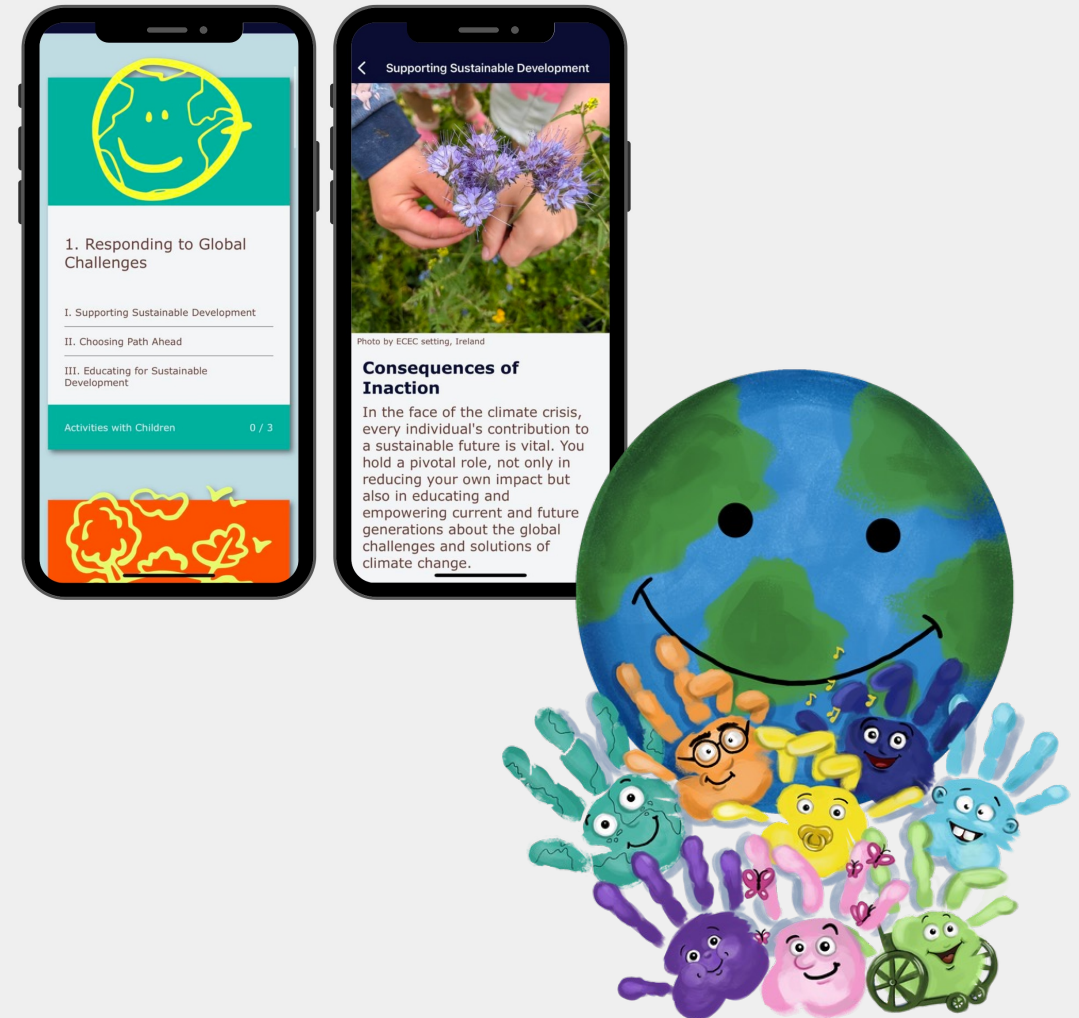
2024-04-26

OMEP European Conference and Assembly

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Love Fredholm (edChild)

Sofia Zätterström (edChild)



“The course is an easy way to start helping the planet feel better.”
- Jessica, preschool teacher

Only 5 years left to reach 2030 targets

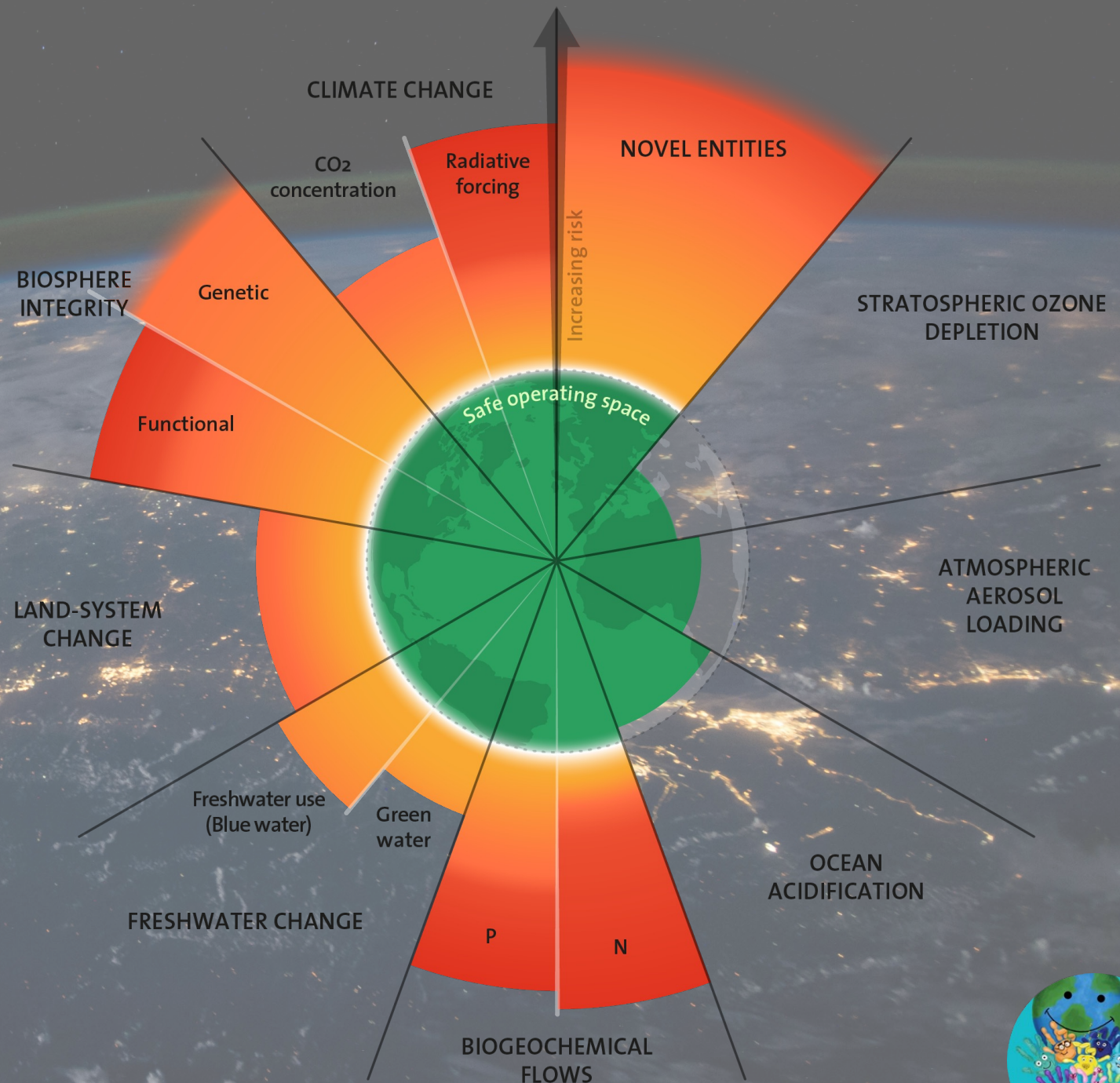
We are half-way through “the decade of action” when the UN Global Sustainability Goals (SDGs) should be met, and emissions should be halved.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



We are exceeding 6/9 planetary boundaries

Six out of nine planetary boundaries are transgressed, suggesting that Earth is now well out of safe operating space for humanity.





“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world”

- Nelson Mandela (2003)

The true impetus for change lies in transforming our behaviours and actions. Education emerges as a catalyst, enabling the transformation of mindsets, conduct, and systems.

Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) plays a crucial role in equipping individuals with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to adopt sustainable behaviours and make informed decisions.



We want to contribute to change

- Let us present our Erasmus+ project *ESD for ECE* that led to the course “Sustainability from the Start”
- What can I learn from this presentation?
 - As a teacher in Early Childhood: Thoughts and suggestions for how to work with handprints instead of footprints in ESD together with your child group
 - As a researcher or project leader: Ideas for design of an international large-scale project
 - As a teacher educator: Suggestions for how the online course can be used together with student teachers in teacher programmes





Why this project? Why now?

The importance of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) in Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC)

- 1 Starts at Birth: Education begins at birth. ESD in ECEC engages children in meaningful ways, supported by adults with appropriate curricula
- 2 Responds to Urgent Global Challenges: ESD is a response to the urgent and dramatic challenges the planet faces
- 3 Has Gained Global Recognition: The launch of the Greening Education Hub at COP28 in 2023 highlights the global commitment to integrating sustainability into education



Why handprints instead of footprints?

Why emphasise handprints over footprints in ESD? Why are the '8 Friends' (characters in our course) represented as handprints?

- 1 Positive Impact: Our handprint represents the positive actions we take toward sustainability, suggesting a hands-on approach to making a difference
- 2 Joy in Learning: Education should be a joyful experience, instilling hope and a positive vision for the future rather than fear or burden
- 3 Appropriate Responsibility: While children play an important role in mitigating environmental issues, it is essential to assign responsibility where it belongs and not overburden children as "saviours of sustainability" for problems created by adults



The process behind the course

Partners

- edChild, Kristianstad University, and OMEP in Sweden, Croatia, Czech Republic, Ireland, and France

Time period

- 2022-2024
- Soft launch of course in fall 2023, Official launch today!

Designing the course

- ESD course in 8 modules, each partner responsible for one or two modules
- Learning, Teaching, Training activities with ECEC educators from each country, leading to development of the course
- Multiplier Events
- Adaptation of the course to teacher programmes and student teachers in the different countries
- 5 languages, catered for multiple curricula
- Course available via edChild's app ECE Academy



From Fragmented to Holistic

Digital Transformation of Educational Content

- Content Cohesion: A dedicated text team ensured seamless, accessible transitions from theory, produced by several partners, to coherent digital content
- Tone Consistency: The text team focused on maintaining a uniform voice to engage learners effectively
- Translation: Performed in two stages by each partner / country
- Visual Harmony: A dedicated image team aligned photos with text and created videos to enhance learning
- Technical Adaptation: edChild's tech team improved the ECE Academy app for optimal course delivery
- Collaborative Creation: edChild collaborated with an external company to develop interactive '8 Friends' materials

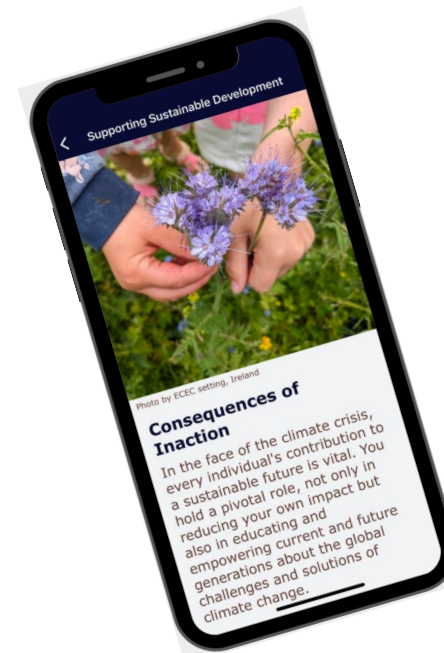


We have a result

- 1 **Sustainability from the Start**: A focused course on sustainability tailored for teaching with children
- 2 **Complimentary Access**: Free access through a specific educational app
- 3 **Applied Learning**: Practical activities supported by various learning materials with the '8 Friends' (posters, children's diploma, quiz, etc)
- 4 **Certification**: Certification as a form of accomplishment recognition



Get to know the
'8 Friends' characters



Example of a module's reflective questions:

- Which cultural background do you have, and how has it been or is it important to you?
- Have you noticed any inequalities in your society today, and if so, how do you think we work towards addressing and reducing them?
- What benefits can intergenerational learning bring to both Children and adults?





Module 1
Introduction of the
concept Sustainable
Development.
Activities with Tinka.



Module 2
Environmental
dimension of
Sustainable
Development.
Activities with Olly.



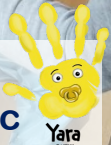
Module 3
Social (and cultural)
dimension of
Sustainable
Development.
Activities with Danni.



Module 4
Economic dimension
of Sustainable
Development.
Activities with Ginny.



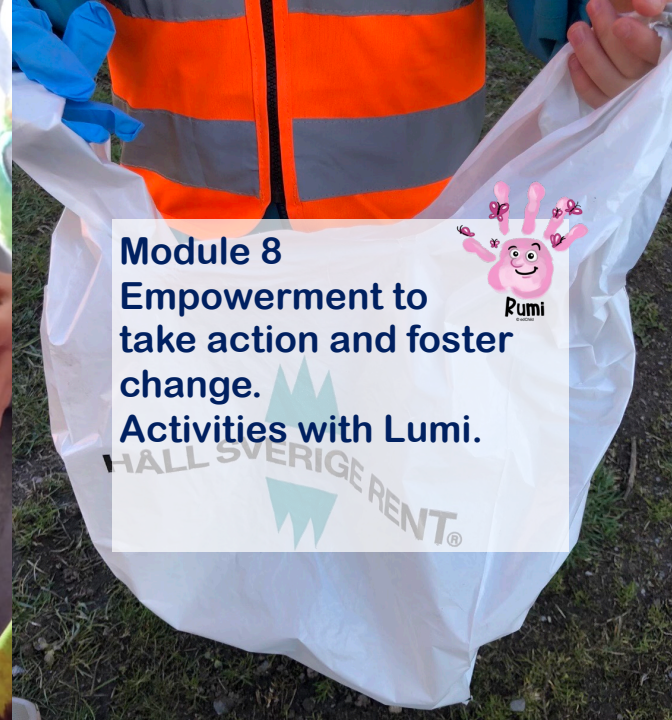
Module 5
Introduces a holistic
and integrated
approach in education
and sustainability
initiatives.
Activities with Yara.



Module 6
Emphasises building
connections to the
neighbourhood, and the
global community.
Activities with Lumi.



Module 7
Collaborations and
networking with
European and
international partners.
Activities with Petra.



Module 8
Empowerment to
take action and foster
change.
Activities with Lumi.



Traction beyond our imagination

Turquoise Tinka takes care of nature
About a leaf, a tree, flowers, and water

Orange Olly loves to roam
To be in nature, to discover something new

Blue-blue Danny the musician will be
And he always says that we are all different

Green Ginny will be happy
If she can make something out of the waste

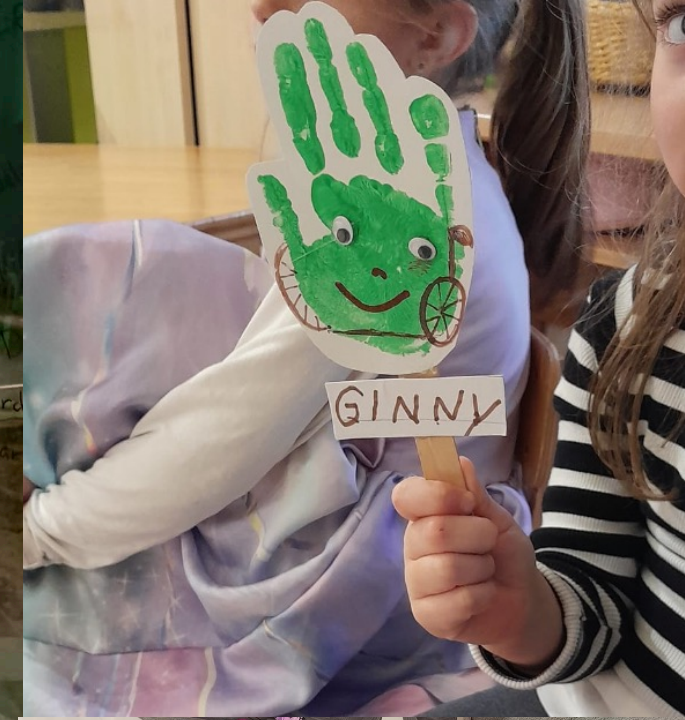
Yellow Yara rejoices in the water
And he tells us - be careful, saving is in fashion

Blue Lumi's heart does not hurt
When her friend loves nature

Purple Petra loves her team
And all kinds of new things work with her

Roza Rumi, "8 Friends" calls
To create new projects together

Written by preschool Makarska Vrtić CICIBAN, Croatia





Outcome (as of April 2024)

2500+

Number of people enrolled to the course

Sweden

#1 country with most people enrolled

Sweden

Croatia

Czech

Ireland

Australia

Top 5 global enrolment list

Australia

Canada

Taiwan

Japan

UAE

Top 5 list outside of Europe with most people enrolled

>40%

Conversion rate on AppStore / Google Play

45+

Number of countries where the course is used



Key take-aways from children

If we throw away the juice bottle, it will not melt, it will be ugly among the beautiful flowers.

Water can disappear because it will hide in the ground, we must not use it all, nor spill it.

Earth should be in nature - we only walk on it.

A stone should be a mountain. If there were no stone, there would be only dirt and grass.

What happens to waste in nature? An animal can eat it and suffocate.



“We love the Earth”

Key take-aways from an international large-scale project

- Set clear (and ambitious) goals
- Define roles and responsibilities for coordination
- Promote transparent communication
- Embrace inclusion and diversity – meeting people who do things in a different way is the beauty of a large-scale project
- And be agile and willing to change – it will not turn out the way you thought which is probably for the better 😊



Teacher training courses

Examples from the project partners

- Discussing module 3 (Building a Caring and Inclusive Community) between student teachers and supervisors on University's Supervision Day
- Engaging student teachers with course content through seminars and applying it with children during practice periods, followed by reflections
- Organising students into groups of four to explore the introductory module and one selected module, enhancing it with additional topics, questions, and suggested activities for children in ECEC settings



Next step

Join us

- Official launch today!
- Download the app ECE Academy from AppStore / Google Play
- Create your free account and get started today

Help us spread the word

- Help us spread the word
- Let us join forces for a Sustainable Development

We will also be featured here

- ESD course with the Swedish National Agency for Education (from September 2024)
- Promoted by Global OMEP
- Promoted by NTA (Science and Technology for Everyone)
- Promoted by iFous (Innovation, research, and development in schools and preschools)

Symposium / Workshop today 11.00-12.30

- Join us for a workshop today
- You will get hands-on tips on how to start using the course
- The workshop will cover
 - The course from a principal's perspective
 - The course from a teacher's perspective
 - The course from a toddler's perspective

Welcome!



Thank you!

**READY TO
EDUCATE FOR
SUSTAINABLE
FUTURE?**

ECE Academy



<https://www.edchild.com/>



<https://www.facebook.com/groups/eceacademyforearlychildhoodeducators>



SUSTAINABILITY FROM THE START

Education for Sustainable
Development in Early Childhood
Education